Jr Jochelson E-5 (1908-III) 1908 344 Koryak R74



778

844

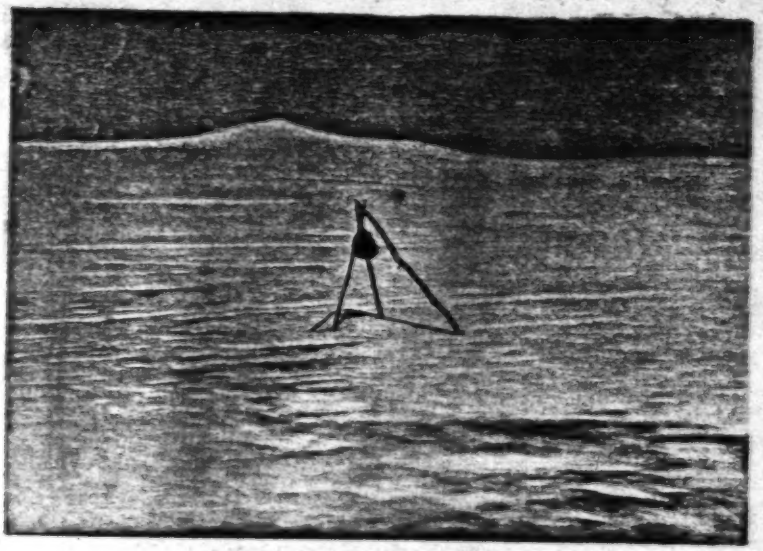

FIG. 2. DISPOSITION OF AFTER-BIRTH.



[Facing p. 97]

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak RY4



which the husband shut his eyes to his wife's liaison with their herdsman; but the husband was a sickly man, and, besides, the herd belonged to his wife. I learned of another curious case on the Taigonos Peninsula. A man, being informed that his wife was visited by his neighbor while he himself was absent, said to the offender, "If you like my wife, don't visit her secretly, but take her altogether, only give me your daughter in exchange." The neighbor complied with so wise a proposal, and they exchanged the women; the neighbor, as luck would have it, having a grown-up daughter.

TREATMENT OF CHILDREN. — The birth of a child is a joyous event, and marked by a feast, to which guests are invited from other houses, or, among the Reindeer Koryak, from other camps. This festivity is called Añanavisxatin ("woman's feast"). Among the Maritime Koryak, all women and girls of the village are invited in. Men are not admitted at all; even the master of the house leaves his home. The main dish consists of gruel or pudding made of flour, blood, meat, and fat. This pudding is called ta'knañoika ("bearing-blessing"), symbolizing the future welfare of the child. The Reindeer Koryak, on the occasion of the birth of a child, kill one or more reindeer, and invite men and women to the feast; but the women eat apart from the men, in the sleeping-tent of the young mother, while the house-master entertains the men in the outer tent. The Reindeer Koryak make the same kind of pudding as the Maritime Koryak, and call it by the same name.

I have already spoken[1] of the taboos to which the young mother is subjected, of the care taken to guard the child against evil spirits, and of the divination ceremony while giving a name to the new-born. According to the statements of Koryak women, confinement is easy. In each settlement there is an experienced woman who acts as a midwife. The navel-string is cut with an ordinary iron knife. This knife is not used again until the child is able to walk. The new-born child is rubbed with moss, and immediately placed in a combination-suit,[2] which takes the place of a cradle. The child is rocked by the mother in her arms, or placed in bed by her own side. On the flap[3] between the child's legs moss is laid, which is frequently changed. The child is nursed up to the age of two or three years, unless a second pregnancy of the mother prevents her from doing so. At a very early age the child is given pieces of fat of reindeer or seal to suck. I was told that, if the mother dies during or soon after confinement, the child is killed and cremated with the mother, as artificial feeding is impossible with the Koryak's means of existence.

The Koryak are very fond of children. They take good care of them and fondle them. Children are beaten very rarely, and yet they are meek and obedient. I have often marvelled at the authority exercised by the elders over the children. I related the case[4] of a girl of about nine who consented

[1] See Part I, pp. 100, 101. [2] See p. 601. [3] See p. 602. [4] See p. 591.